



The Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools:



Parent and Caregiver Resource Guide



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How to use this resource

What is the purpose of this resource?

This resource guide is for you: the parents and caregivers of children navigating the impacts of toxic stress and trauma. There are great tools and resources that already exist about how to support young people, so this will include helpful links to external resources, as well as key points that are essential for all parents and caregivers to know.

What does this resource include?

It's impossible for one resource guide to include all the information you may need to support your child. It's also important to know that nothing in this document is a substitute for support from a professional. If you are concerned about your child and think your child may need professional help, it is important to reach out. You can find suggestions for who can help in the Hotlines and Resources section beginning on page 11.



How to understand age vs. developmental stage

Under “How to support your child,” you will find resources specific to the age of your child. It is important to note that not all children will benefit only from the resources targeted to their age. As all children are different and develop at their own pace, the point at which each child reaches a specific developmental milestone varies. How relevant a resource is to you as a caregiver will depend on your child’s developmental stage.

How to understand your role as a support and advocate

The best outcomes for students are achieved when parents and caregivers are able to work with schools. As a parent or caregiver, you know your children best and have invaluable information about their needs, strengths, interests, and experiences that will affect their education. The educators at your children’s school may also be able to offer important insights to you about their needs and behaviors. Sometimes, supporting struggling students can carry a lot of emotions for parents, caregivers, and educators. Collaboration is key to make sure everyone is working in the best interest of each child.

Overview of “The Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools” guidance document

Background

The Missouri Model: A Developmental Framework for Trauma-Informed Approaches, first developed in 2014, offers guidance at the highest level for organizations within every sector on how to become trauma-informed. *The Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools* guidance, approved in January 2019, provides language and processes to support schools interested in beginning the journey to become trauma-informed. **This accompanying parent and caregiver resource document is designed to provide parents and caregivers with tools you can use to cultivate trauma-informed environments that nurture your children’s learning and growth.**

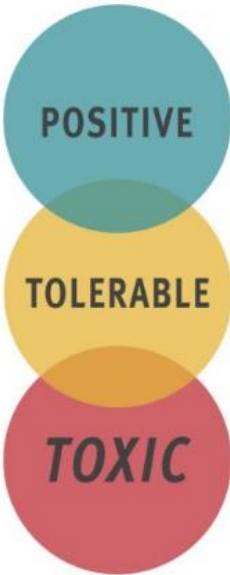
What is trauma and toxic stress?

Trauma and toxic stress can be scary words, and the research shows us that these experiences can have harmful impacts on everyone, especially children. It’s natural for us to want to do everything we can to help protect our children from these experiences and to know how to best support them when bad things do happen. While all children and their experiences are unique, this resource guide will connect you with a wide variety of information on how you can help your children at home and how you can advocate for them and work with their school to support their wellbeing.

It’s important to understand what we mean by the terms *trauma* and *toxic stress*. Trauma does not have a simple definition. We think about trauma as a combination of the things that happen to us and how we experience them.



The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) describes trauma as “an **event**, series of events, or set of circumstances that is **experienced** by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening and that has lasting adverse **effects** on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.” More simply said, trauma happens when we experience a threat to our safety that overwhelms our ability to cope.



Center on the Developing Child. Toxic Stress. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/toxic-stress/>

What is a trauma-informed school?

When children experience toxic stress and trauma, they need all the adults around them, including their parents or caregivers

and their educators, to support them in healing and moving forward. Trauma-informed schools are meant to be places that help do this. First, a trauma-informed school acknowledges that many of its students have had traumatic experiences and helps students build their toolbox of coping skills and strong adult relationships. Trauma-informed schools also actively resist creating more trauma and toxic stress for students. Unfortunately, for some students, their traumatic experiences happen inside the classroom. Trauma-informed schools seek to make sure that never happens.

Why is this important?

Children's parents or caregivers are the most important people in their lives, and the ones best positioned to help children deal with traumatic experiences. That said, it never hurts to give children more access to healthy, supportive relationships with adults and practices that support their resilience and wellbeing. Children spend about half of their waking hours inside a school building, so it's essential that these hours not only prepare them with academic skills, but also the life skills that will be essential in their future. Optimally, parents and caregivers can work with schools as partners in creating the best possible outcomes for all students.

Toxic stress is very similar to trauma in that it happens for us and our children when our coping mechanisms are overwhelmed. Not all stress is bad. In fact, we want our children to experience some stress. Think about the stress of the challenge of learning to read or ride a bike. A little bit of stress helps our kids learn and become better at bouncing back in the face of adversity. Too much stress for too long, though, can make it hard for our kids to learn or control their emotions and behaviors.

This ability to bounce back – or “bounce *forward*” – from stress and overcome hardship is **resilience**. We want our children to build resilience so that they can cope with life's stressors and challenges as they grow older.

“The single most common factor for children who develop resilience is at least one stable and committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult. These relationships provide the personalized responsiveness, scaffolding, and protection that buffer children from developmental disruption. They also build key capacities—such as the ability to plan, monitor, and regulate behavior—that enable children to respond adaptively to adversity and thrive. This combination of supportive relationships, adaptive skill-building, and positive experiences is the foundation of resilience.”

Center on the Developing Child. Resilience. (n.d.) Retrieved from <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/science/key-concepts/resilience/>

How do I know if my child's school is trauma-informed?

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has provided public schools in Missouri with information about how to implement *The Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools*. It is important to know, however, that there is no requirement for schools in Missouri to become trauma-informed. The trauma-informed process requires a multi-year commitment to transforming culture and policy; many school districts have not yet started this journey or are in very early stages. Parents and caregivers can play an essential role in supporting schools in making this shift. If you are curious about what your child's school is doing about trauma, you should ask school leadership. If they don't know, you can point them to [The Missouri Model for Trauma-Informed Schools](#) as a resource to begin their work.

The principles that a trauma-informed school is working to address are **safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment**.

According to the Missouri Model, the principles are defined as the following:

Trustworthiness

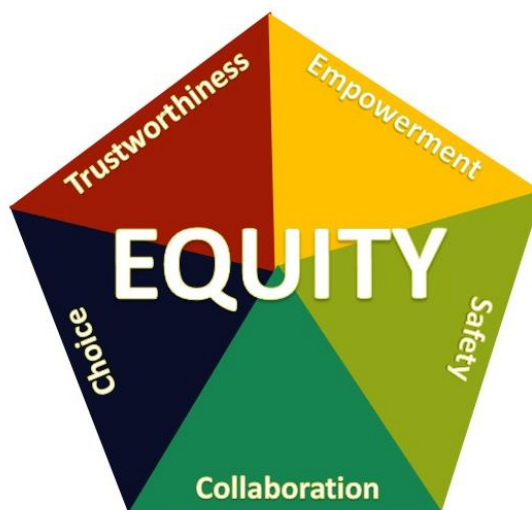
Foster genuine relationships and practices that build trust, making tasks clear, maintaining appropriate boundaries and creating norms for interaction that promote reconciliation and healing. Understand and respond to ways in which explicit and implicit power can affect the development of trusting relationships. This includes acknowledging and mitigating internal biases and recognizing the historic power of majority populations.

Choice

Maximize choice, addressing how privilege, power, and historic relationships impact both perceptions about and ability to act upon choice.

Safety

Ensure physical and emotional safety, recognizing and responding to how racial, ethnic, religious, sexual, or gender identity may impact safety throughout the lifespan.



Empowerment

Encourage self-efficacy, identifying strengths and building skills which leads to individual pathways for healing while recognizing and responding to the impact of historical trauma and oppression.

Collaboration

Honor transparency and self-determination and seek to minimize the impact of the inherent power differential while maximizing collaboration and sharing responsibility for making meaningful decisions.

Self-care

Why self-care is essential

Self-care is purposeful and intentional acts that help us recharge. What our kids need more than anything else are adults who are doing and feeling well and are able to connect with them. Supporting children who have experienced trauma and toxic stress can be challenging, and it's important for parents and caregivers to make sure that they don't forget about themselves as they care for their children.

What does self-care mean?

Self-care looks different for every person. Acts of self-care have to actually support and recharge you; self-care is not just what you think should make you feel better. Ask yourself "does this activity make me feel more recharged after I do it?" If the answer is yes, chances are it's a good self-care activity for you. If it feels like something takes more from you than it gives, then you should look for other ideas of how to take care of yourself.



As you develop your own self-care plan, consider these areas of health and wellbeing:

- Mental
- Financial
- Emotional
- Social
- Spiritual
- Physical

There are numerous resources available that can help you improve your self-care.

Learn to make a self-care plan:

<https://schools.au.reachout.com/articles/developing-a-self-care-plan>

Self-care for parents:

<https://www.peps.org/ParentResources/by-topic/self-care/self-care-for-parents>

Self-care checklist:

https://www.scanva.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019SelfCare_English.pdf

Parent rights

Every child deserves a quality education in a safe school environment. As parents and caregivers of children in Missouri schools, you play a critical role in supporting their healthy growth and development and you have the power to advocate for your children in school. Knowing your rights and the rules guiding your children's education will help you to be a strong advocate.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) shares information about students' rights:

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/students-rights/>

DESE outlines the rights of families in Missouri schools, regardless of their living situation:

- Homeless families: <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-fc-2016%20MV%20Poster.pdf>
- Migrant families: <https://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-Migrant-Brochure-English-2016-June.pdf>

➤ If your child has a disability

If your child has a disability or qualifies for an IEP (Individualized Education Program) or 504 Plan, you have rights.

- You can read the Parents' Bill of Rights from DESE here: <https://dese.mo.gov/special-education/compliance/parents-bill-rights>
- Missouri Parents Act (MPACT) offers resources to empower parents and caregivers of children with disabilities as advocates for their children and help them navigate the special education process: <http://www.missouriparentsact.org/>
- Missouri Family to Family offers free consultation, resources, and training to build advocacy skills for families of individuals with disabilities and/or special health care needs, including services in Spanish: <https://mofamilytofamily.org/>
- The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights provides a Frequently Asked Questions document about Section 504: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/504faq.html>
- The National Center for Learning Disabilities offers more information about Section 504: <https://www.ncld.org/archives/action-center/learn-the-law/understanding-section-504>
- Understood shares resources in English and Spanish to support parents and caregivers of

children with learning and attention issues:

<https://www.understood.org/en>

- The Foster & Adoptive Care Coalition has created an Educational Advocacy Resource Guide to help foster and adoptive parents and families navigate the special education system. Call 314-367-8378 for consultation and to request a copy of the guide.
- The Missouri Developmental Disabilities Council's leadership and advocacy training program, Partners in Policymaking, can help parents and caregivers learn how to advocate for systems change: https://www.moddcouncil.org/?page_id=1892

➤ If your child is an English Learner

If your child is an English Learner, you have rights. The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights provides information about schools' civil rights obligations to English Learner students and Limited English Proficient parents: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/ellresources.html>

DESE's "English Learner Rights: A resource for families" document highlights the rights of English Learners and their families and shares recommendations for how families can engage in their children's education. See pages 20-21.

➤ School discipline

DESE provides information about the rules for student discipline in schools:

<https://dese.mo.gov/financial-admin-services/school-governance/student-discipline>

You should receive information about your child's school's discipline policy at the beginning of each school year.

Legal Services of Eastern Missouri offers a student discipline "Know Your Rights" resource for students and caregivers. See pages 22-23.

➤ Law enforcement in school

Children and caregivers have rights if they are faced by law enforcement officials in school. This includes U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The U.S. Supreme Court has established that all children must have access to free public education regardless of their immigration status. Public schools have no legal obligation to aid immigration officials in an enforcement action.

- ACLU Missouri's "Know Your Rights for Back to School" webpage shares students' rights when engaging with law enforcement in school: <https://www.aclu-mo.org/en/news/know-your-rights-back-school>
- The ACLU's "FAQ for Educators on Immigrant Students in Public Schools" provides answers to questions about the information schools can collect from students and ICE actions in schools: <https://www.aclu.org/other/faq-educators-immigrant-students-public-schools>
- The Fair Immigration Reform Movement (FIRM) "Frequently Asked Questions for School Officials: What to do if ICE Shows Up at Your School" document aims to help educators "as they work to ensure immigrant students' right to an education is not undermined by federal immigration enforcement efforts": <https://s3.amazonaws.com/firm->

<img/uploads/2017/03/Resources-for-Educators.pdf>

- The Intercultural Development Research Association's "Welcoming Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools" infographic, available in English and Spanish, offers an easy-to-read outline of what public schools can and cannot ask of immigrant students and caregivers: <https://www.idra.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Welcoming-Immigrant-Students-IDRA-Infographic-2019-Letter-Bilingual-sm.pdf>
- Missouri Immigrant & Refugee Advocates (MIRA) and the Migrant & Immigrant Community Action (MICA) Project share additional resources for immigrants, educators, and service providers on their webpages: <https://www.mira-mo.org/resources> and <http://www.mica-project.org/resources.html>

➤ Discrimination

According to the [ACLU](#), "the Constitution requires that all kids be given equal educational opportunity no matter what their race, ethnic background, religion, or sex, or whether they are rich or poor, citizen or non-citizen."

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights works to ensure equal access to education and to "protect every student's right to learn in a safe environment free from unlawful discrimination." You can find information about how to file a discrimination complaint with Office for Civil Rights at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/howto.html?src=rt>.

Although there are no federal laws that directly address bullying in the school environment, some instances of bullying may be considered discriminatory harassment, which is covered under federal civil rights laws. More information is available at <https://www.stopbullying.gov/laws/federal/index.html>.

Advocacy for safe and inclusive schools

Children need to feel safe, valued, and cared for in their school environment in order to be engaged learners. Knowledge about the characteristics of a positive school climate can help you understand what your child's school and district are doing to foster a safe learning environment and identify areas for improvement.

The Education Trust's "Ensuring a Positive School Climate and Culture" fact sheet shares tools parents and caregivers can use to advocate for a positive school climate: https://edtrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/ESSA_FactSheet_Positive-School-Climate-and-Culture_Hyperlinks-1.pdf.

The U.S. Department of Education provides background information on school climate improvement efforts in this "Parent and Educator Guide to School Climate Resources" document: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essaguidetoschoolclimate041019.pdf>.

Many students and educators are facing trauma at a community level through experiences such as poverty, community violence, racism, sexism, and homophobia. Many of these forms of community trauma are also rooted in historical traumas – those traumas which may have started or taken place far in the past that continue to have far reaching impacts on the present. These community and historical traumas are rooted in systemic oppression, which has created ongoing stress in communities through the disempowerment, disinvestment, and discrimination they experience.

Schools cannot be trauma-informed without acknowledging that for healing from discrimination to take place, school staff need to demonstrate an understanding of historical trauma and the relationship between systemic oppression and trauma. Students, parents, and caregivers need to feel welcome and valued in the school community. When parents and caregivers feel like they belong in a school, they are better advocates for their children. As your children's schools are working to become trauma-informed, it is important that they see you as partners in helping your children succeed.

The Center for Cognitive Diversity shares a sample letter that parents and caregivers can send to their children's educators and school administrators with recommendations for creating a trauma-informed learning environment: https://www.centerforcognitivediversity.com/uploads/1/3/8/8/1388162/trauma_informed_parent_letter.pdf

The following are examples of how parents and caregivers can advocate for a more inclusive environment that creates safety for all:

- Support recruitment and retention of educators and staff of color
- Advocate for curriculum that addresses racism and systemic oppression
- Advocate for required anti-bias or anti-racism training for all staff
- Support the disaggregation of performance data by race and other demographics

There are many organizations that offer resources educators can use to expand what they are addressing in the classroom. Here are a few recommended organizations:

- Rethinking Schools: <https://www.rethinkingschools.org/>
- Teaching Tolerance: <https://www.tolerance.org/>
- Zinn Education Project: <https://www.zinnedproject.org/>
- Facing History and Ourselves: <https://www.facinghistory.org/>

How to support your child



Hotlines

If you need immediate crisis assistance, problem-solving support, or referrals to services, you can call any of the hotlines or warmlines and visit any of the websites below. (Hotlines are organized in alphabetical order.)

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT HOTLINE

A hotline any person can call to report suspected child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The hotline will accept anonymous reports from those who are not mandated reporters.

- **Website:** <https://dss.mo.gov/cd/keeping-kids-safe/can.htm>
- **Call:** 1-800-392-3738
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
 - For hearing and speech impaired: 1-800-735-2466/voice or 1-800-735-2966/text phone.

CHILDELP NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE

A hotline operated by professional crisis counselors that offers crisis intervention, information, and referrals to emergency, social service, and support resources.

- **Website:** <http://www.childhelp.org/hotline/>
- **Call:** (1-800) 422-4453
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- **Text:** (1-800) 422-4453

CRISIS TEXT LINE

A secure text line operated by a live, trained Crisis Counselor that provides support to anyone in any type of crisis.

- **Website:** <https://www.crisistextline.org/>
- **Text:** Text HOME to 741741
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week

COURAGE2REPORT MISSOURI (FORMERLY SCHOOL VIOLENCE HOTLINE)

A confidential means for students, parents, school personnel, and concerned citizens to report school violence. Courage2Report accepts tips concerning children in grades pre-kindergarten through 12 in any public or private schools in Missouri.

- **Website:** <https://www.mshp.dps.missouri.gov/MSHPWeb/Courage2ReportMO/index.html>
 - Reporting option available through online form
- **Call:** 866-748-7047
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week

LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER (LGBT) NATIONAL HELP CENTER

An organization that hosts peer chatrooms and three national hotlines that provide peer support, answers to questions, and referrals to resources regarding sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

- **Website:** www.glbthotline.org
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual And Transgender National Hotline:** 1-888-843-4564
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 3:00-11:00 p.m.; Saturday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- **LGBT National Youth Talkline:** 1-800-246-7743
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 3:00-11:00 p.m.; Saturday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) National Senior Hotline:** 1-888-234-7243
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 3:00-11:00 p.m.; Saturday 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
- **Email:** help@LGBThotline.org

NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS MISSOURI WARMLINE

A peer phone line operated by mental health consumers that offers compassion, encouragement, and support for those living with mental illness.

- **Website:** <https://namimissouri.org/warmline/>
- **Call:** 1-800-374-2138
 - Hours: Weekdays 9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.; weekends and holidays 3:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

A hotline that provides support and resources to survivors, their families and friends, and abusive partners, as well as information about abuse and healthy relationships.

- **Website:** <https://www.thehotline.org/>
 - Online chat available 24 hours/7 days a week
- **Call:** 1-800-799-7233
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
 - In Spanish: 1-800-799-7233
 - For Deaf & Hard of Hearing: 1-855-812-1011

NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

A confidential hotline that takes reports of potential human trafficking and provides support to victims in crisis, including referrals to emergency services.

- **Website:** <https://humantraffickinghotline.org/>
 - Chat: www.humantraffickinghotline.org/chat
- **Call:** 1-888-373-7888
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
 - Support is provided in more than 200 languages
- **Text:** 233733

NATIONAL PARENT HELPLINE

A hotline that offers emotional support to parents as they navigate the challenges of parenting.

- **Website:** <https://www.nationalparenthelpline.org/>
- **Call:** 1-855-4A PARENT (1-855-427-2736)
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 12:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SAFELINE

A hotline that provides crisis support and resources to youth and teens who have run away or are considering running away, and their parents and guardians.

- **Website:** <https://www.1800runaway.org/>
- **Call:** 1-800-RUNAWAY (1-800-786-2929)
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT TELEPHONE HOTLINE

A hotline that offers survivors of sexual assault confidential support and referrals to resources.

- **Website:** <https://rainn.org/>
 - In Spanish: <https://rainn.org/es>
 - Live chat: https://hotline.rainn.org/online?_ga=2.128902348.1380069494.1566571406-498252964.1565999551
- **Call:** 800-656-4673
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE

A hotline that provides confidential support for people in distress, as well as prevention and crisis resources.

- **Website:** <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>
 - Lifeline chat (24 hours a day/7 days a week): <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/chat/>
- **Call:** 1-800-273-8255
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
 - In Spanish: 1-888-628-9454
 - For Deaf & Hard of Hearing: 1-800-799-4889

PARENTLINK WARMLINE

A helpline for parents that provides parenting information, problem-solving support, and referrals to maternal and child health services such as WIC, food stamps, and Medicaid assistance.

- **Website:** <https://education.missouri.edu/parentlink/>
- **Call:** 1-800-552-8522 / Local 573-882-7323
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 12:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.
- **Email:** parentlink@missouri.edu
- **Text:** 585-FAMILY1 (585-326-4591)

SAFE AT HOME ADDRESS CONFIDENTIALITY PROGRAM

A program that assists survivors of domestic violence and abuse by identifying an alternative address they can use when creating new documents such as driver's licenses.

- **Website:** www.MoSafeAtHome.com
- **Call:** 866-509-1409

THE TREVOR PROJECT LIFELINE

A hotline that provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention support to LGBTQ young people under 25.

- **Website:** www.thetrevorproject.org
 - **Online chat:** <https://www.thetrevorproject.org/get-help-now/>
- **Call:** 1-866-488-7386
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- **Text:** Text START to 678678

TRANS LIFELINE'S PEER SUPPORT HOTLINE

A hotline operated by trans people that offers trans and questioning individuals help if they are in crisis, as well as information about identification changes.

- **Website:** <https://www.translifeline.org/hotline>
- **Call:** 877-565-8860
 - Hours: 7 days a week 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m.

UNITED WAY 211 OF MISSOURI

A helpline that provides referrals to services such as counseling, education, employment, food pantries, housing, and utility assistance.

- **Website:** <https://www.211helps.org/>
- **Call:** 2-1-1
 - Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week
 - Multilingual services are available

USDA NATIONAL HUNGER HOTLINE

A hotline that connects individuals and families seeking food with emergency services.

- **Website:** <https://www.hungerfreeamerica.org/about/our-work/usda-national-hunger-hotline>
- **Call:** 1-866-3-HUNGRY
 - Hours: Monday through Friday 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.
 - In Spanish: 1-877-8-HAMBRE

WOMENSLAW EMAIL HOTLINE

An email hotline that provides people of all genders, not just women, with legal information and answers to questions regarding domestic and sexual violence.

- **Website:** www.womenslaw.org/
 - **Spanish:** <https://www.womenslaw.org/es>
- **Email hotline:** <https://hotline.womenslaw.org/public>

Parents as Teachers provides free services, including home visits and developmental health screenings, to all families with children up to age 5 in public school districts in Missouri. To locate a program in your area, visit <https://parentsasteachers.org/program-locator-1>. Call (314) 432-4330 with questions.

Resources

Many organizations have put together materials to help parents and caregivers support children of different ages in healing after they have experienced trauma.



These organizations offer libraries of resources that address multiple topics:

- **Sesame Street:** <https://www.sesamestreet.org/toolkits>
 - Resources for caregivers that “provide opportunities to build closeness and confidence, making learning fun, and keep your child's world safe and secure.” Toolkits cover topics such as divorce, emergency preparation, grief, incarceration, military families, support after emergency, brain development, and resilience.
- **Sesame Street in Communities:** <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/>
 - Resources for caregivers to support children’s health and wellness, social-emotional skills, and school readiness. Toolkits cover topics such as community violence, incarceration, divorce, homelessness, foster care, emergency preparation, grief, and resilience.
- **National Child Traumatic Stress Network:** <https://www.nctsn.org/audiences/families-and-caregivers>
 - Resources for families and caregivers to keep children and teens safe and support them in understanding their responses to trauma, including resources in diverse languages. Toolkits cover topics such as bullying, community violence, complex trauma, disasters, early childhood trauma, historical trauma, intimate partner violence, medical trauma, physical abuse, refugee trauma, school violence, separation and deportation, sexual abuse, terrorism and violence, trafficking, and traumatic grief.
- **Fred Rogers Productions:** <https://www.fredrogers.org/parents/special-challenges/>
 - Resources for families and caregivers to support children in coping with loss. Toolkits cover topics such as dealing with death, divorce and separation, adoption, moving, and tragic events in the news.

The below toolkits and tip sheets are organized by category and age range so you can identify the information you need to help your child process, cope, and grow. The “Description” section includes more details about the specific topics each resource addresses. This list of resources is not exhaustive, but it will help you get started finding ways to support your child. (Resources are listed alphabetically by category.)

Category	Organization	Title	Link	Description	Age range
Alcohol and drug use	NCADA Talk About It	Free Talking Kits	http://www.talkaboutitmo.com/free-talking-kits/	Conversation starters and talking tips for conversations with youth about alcohol and drug use, including recommendations for building open lines of communication.	PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12

Category	Organization	Title	Link	Description	Age range
Alcohol and drug use	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Talk. They Hear You.	https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/parent-resources	Resources for parents and caregivers to “start—and keep up—the conversation about the dangers of drinking alcohol and using other drugs at a young age.”	Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Chronic illness	Children’s Hospital Colorado	Parent Toolkit: Strategies for Maximizing your Child's Health	https://www.childrenscolorado.org/conditions-and-advice/parenting/parenting-articles/toolkit/	A toolkit for parents and caregivers of children who have been diagnosed with a chronic illness.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Coping after disaster	National Child Traumatic Stress Network	Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children After Disasters	English: https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/pfa_parent_tips_for_helping_preschool_age_children_after_disasters.pdf Spanish: https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/pfa_parent_tips_for_helping_school_age_children_after_disasters_span.pdf	Recommendations of steps for caregivers to take and things to say to support children after a disaster.	Preschool
Coping after disaster and traumatic events	National Institute of Mental Health	Helping Children and Adolescents Cope with Disasters and Other Traumatic Events: What Parents, Rescue Workers, and the Community Can Do	https://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/publications/helping-children-and-adolescents-cope-with-disasters-and-other-traumatic-events/index.shtml	Information about trauma and recommendations for providing support to children and adolescents after a traumatic event.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12

Category	Organization	Title	Link	Description	Age range
Coping after traumatic events	Child Mind Institute	Helping Children Cope After a Traumatic Event	https://childmind.org/guide/helping-children-cope-traumatic-event/	Tips for how to help children cope and recover after a traumatic event.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Coping after traumatic events	Child Welfare Information Gateway	Parenting a Child Who Has Experienced Trauma	https://www.childwelfare.gov/publications/child-trauma.pdf	A resource guide that “discusses the nature of trauma, its effects on children and youth, and ways to help your child.”	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Coping with violence	National Association for the Education of Young Children	Resources for Families: Coping with Violence	https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/coping-with-violence	A list of resources for “parents, teachers, and others working with young children about coping with violence and talking to young children about tragedies they learn about in the media.”	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Coping with violence	Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice	Healing the Invisible Wounds: Children’s Exposure to Violence A Guide for Families	https://www.ojjdp.gov/programs/safestart/HealingTheInvisibleWounds.pdf	A guide for families and caregivers to “understand children’s behavior,” “encourage children to express what they’re thinking and feeling,” and “help children feel safe and in control.”	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Divorce	Kids In The Middle	Tips	http://www.kidsinthemiddle.org/tips/	A list of articles for parents supporting children coping with divorce, including articles about stages and reactions of children going through divorce, co-parenting, and back to school tips.	PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12

Category	Organization	Title	Link	Description	Age range
Foster care	American Academy of Pediatrics	Parenting after Trauma: Understanding Your Child's Needs: A Guide for Foster and Adoptive Parents	https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/healthy-foster-care-america/Documents/FamilyHandout.pdf	Tips for how to support children who have been adopted or placed into foster care who may have experienced early trauma.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5
Juvenile justice system	The National Child Traumatic Stress Network	Complex Trauma: In Juvenile Justice-System Involved Youth	https://www.nctsn.org/resources/complex-trauma-juvenile-justice-system-involved-youth	Fact sheet outlining the relationship between complex trauma exposure and juvenile justice system involvement, with recommendations for how parents and caregivers can build trust with and support youth.	Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Mental health	Mental Health America	Talking To Adolescents And Teens: Time To Talk	https://www.mhainc.org/talking-adolescents-and-teens-time-talk	Information about what caregivers can do to identify mental illness and support children in caring for their mental health.	Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Military families	National Center for PTSD	Children Coping with Deployment	https://www.ptsd.va.gov/family/support_child_deployment.asp	Information about the effects of deployment on children, how to talk to children about war, and how to help children cope with war.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Separation and trauma	Zero to Three	Supporting Young Children Experiencing Separation and Trauma	https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/2384-supporting-young-children-experiencing-separation-and-trauma	A list of resources in English and Spanish for families and caregivers to support young children who have experienced trauma.	Preschool

Category	Organization	Title	Link	Description	Age range
School shooting	Child Trends	Resources to help children in the wake of a school shooting	https://www.childtrends.org/resources-help-children-wake-school-shooting	Recommendations for caregivers about how to talk to children about school shootings and how to support children with direct exposure to a school shooting.	Preschool, PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12
Social emotional development	Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning	Resources: Family Tools	http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/family.html	Resources for parents and caregivers to nurture their children's social emotional development.	Preschool, PreK-2
Social emotional development	Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning	Parent SEL Resources	https://casel.org/parent-resources/	Resources that “focus on the role of parents and parenting in social and emotional learning (SEL).”	PreK-2; Grades 3-5
Social emotional development	Edutopia	A Parent's Resource Guide to Social and Emotional Learning	https://www.edutopia.org/SEL-parents-resources	A collection of “blogs, articles, and videos for parents about fostering skills like kindness, empathy, gratitude, resilience, perseverance, and focus in children.”	PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8
Supporting LGBTQ youth and LGBTQ families	Human Rights Campaign	Explore: Parenting	https://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/parenting	Resources supporting LGBTQ families and LGBTQ youth, including information about how to talk to kids about anti-LGBTQ language, gender stereotyping, and family diversity in an age appropriate way.	PreK-2; Grades 3-5; Grades 6-8; Grades 9-12



English Learner Rights:

A resource for families

As families who speak a language other than English, United States Civil Rights laws affirm the rights of parents to:

Receive important information about the school and your child's performance in a language you can understand. *Examples include enrollment forms, English language development programs, report cards, handbooks, parent-teacher conferences, permission slips and special education and related services.*

An effective English language development program that helps your child overcome the language barrier. *All English language development programs must be recognized as effective by experts, staffed by qualified personnel, supplied with effective resources and evaluated as successful.*

Receive yearly notice of your child's placement in an English language development program that includes the reason for being in the program and what services will be provided. *This notice must be sent to you within 30 days of the beginning of the school year.*

Accommodations and modifications in all classes by all teachers on your child's schedule as necessary based on your child's English proficiency level. *Your child cannot earn a failing grade if these are not provided.*

Participate in all district programs for which they qualify. *Your child can participate in supplemental reading interventions, special education, gifted and talented, career and technical education, athletics, etc.*

Review your child's individual career and academic plan which contains a series of coursework intended to prepare your child for success in life. *Your child has a plan for meeting Missouri's graduation requirements and preparing them for a career after high school.*

A free and meaningful education for students age 5-21 and supplementary programs for qualifying English learners as young as 3. *The only items needed to enroll are proof of residency and immunization records.*

For more information about educating English Learners in Missouri, please visit <https://dese.mo.gov/college-career-readiness/curriculum/english-language-development-eld>

As families who speak a language other than English, you have the responsibility to:

Speak and read to your child in your native language. *Children acquire English faster and learn better when they can speak, understand, read and write in their native language.*

Send your child to school every day prepared to be successful. *Since some students are learning both English and academic skills, being in school every day is very important.*

Be involved in your child's education. *Talk with the teacher(s), attend parent-teacher conferences and other meetings when requested, and communicate concerns with the school. Children do better in school when parents are involved.*

Motivate your child to do their best in school, overcome challenges and pursue their dreams. *Parents play an important role in a child's perception of an education and the value of hard work.*

Set aside time to read together. *Read aloud together, even for older students and especially in the native language.*

Set aside time each day to study. *Successful children need routines and especially at the secondary level, time to study in addition to doing homework or projects.*

Pay attention to how students are using their devices. *These items prevent students from developing their own interests (such as music) and exploring on their own.*

Teach your children about your home culture. *Your children have the gift of being bilingual and deserve to be bi-cultural as well.*

NEXT?

Read your student handbook or code of conduct. If you do not understand it, ask for help from an adult you trust.

Still need help?
Call The Education Justice Program
314.256.8789
ejp@lsemo.org

PHONE NUMBERS I NEED

Adult Name: _____
Phone: _____
Principal Name: _____
Phone: _____
Discipline Office Phone: _____
Superintendent Name: _____
Phone: _____

LEGAL SERVICES OF EASTERN MISSOURI



The Education Justice Program works to disrupt the "School-to-Prison-Pipeline" by ensuring that every child receives a good education, in a safe school, no matter what a child looks like or where a child is from. Our mission is to make that happen.

Questions?
Call the Education Justice Program
314.256.8789
www.lsem.org
ejp@lsemo.org

BE SMART ABOUT SCHOOL DISCIPLINE



Legal Services of Eastern Missouri
Education Justice Program
314.256.8789
www.lsem.org
ejp@lsemo.org

IF YOU ARE SUSPENDED

WHAT IS A SUSPENSION?

A suspension is when you are removed or “kicked out” of school or class as a form of punishment. Suspensions are served in or out of school and can last from 1 to 180 school days. The amount of time you can be suspended depends on what you are accused of and your school’s code of conduct.

WHAT IS A SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION?

- A suspension of 10 school days or less is a “short-term” suspension. Only the principal, or someone with the principal’s permission, can suspend you for 10 school days or less.
- The principal, or person who suspended you, must meet with you and tell you why you were suspended.

- If you are sent home, a note or letter should be sent with you to express why you were sent home and when you can return. If you don’t get a letter, you should ask for one.
- Make sure to ask for any homework you might miss.
- The superintendent can shorten or overturn a short-term suspension.

WHAT IS A LONG-TERM SUSPENSION?

- A suspension of 11 school days or more is a “long-term” suspension.
- First, you are given a short-term suspension as described above.
- The principal then makes a referral to the superintendent for a longer suspension.
- Only a superintendent can approve a suspension of 11 days or more.

- You will meet with the superintendent (or someone they appoint) and your parents (or other adult).
- If the superintendent allows you to be suspended for 11 school days or more, you can write to the Board of Education and ask them to review the suspension.
- You may be able to return to school while the Board decides if you are still suspended. If you plan to return, you should *FIRST* write to the superintendent. The superintendent may deny you the right to return. You cannot be suspended for more than 180 school days.
- Even if you are out of school, an alternative education must be made available to you. Ask the superintendent about those options.

IF YOU ARE EXPELLED

WHAT IS AN EXPULSION?

An expulsion means that you are removed from or “kicked out” of school for an unlimited period of time.

A suspension lasting more than 180 school days is legally an expulsion.

- An alternative education must still be provided to you during this time.
- A principal or superintendent can recommend expulsion but only the Board of Education can expel you.
- A hearing must be held within 180 school days.
- A request can be filed with a court to reverse an expulsion.
- A student can ask to be let back into school by sending a written request along with letters of support to the Board of Education.

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